

John I of Antioch

(fl. c. 429 – c. 441)

BRIEFING

John I of Antioch was Patriarch of Antioch (429 – 441). He led a group of moderate Eastern bishops during the Nestorian controversy.

He is sometimes confused with John Chrysostom, who is occasionally also referred to as *John of Antioch*, though *John of Antioch* is indeed mentioned in the Book of the Miracles of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

BIOGRAPHY

John I gave active support to his friend Nestorius in the latter's dispute with Cyril of Alexandria. In the year 431, he arrived too late for the opening meeting of the First Council of Ephesus. Cyril, suspecting John I of using procrastinating tactics to support Nestorius, decided not to wait and convened the council without John I and his supporters, condemning Nestorius. When John I reached Ephesus a few days after the council had begun, he convened a counter-council that condemned Cyril and vindicated Nestorius.

In this controversy, according to Cyril, partisans of John I arrived at the Council before the Patriarch, and informed Cyril that John would be significantly late in arriving, and that Cyril should proceed with the Council in his absence, telling him, "our lord, the bishop John, commanded us to say to your reverence 'if I am late, do what you are doing.'" Cyril relates how he waited for John I for all of 16 days before finally beginning the Council in John's absence. Cyril's account of these events can be found in Chapter 3 of his Letter to Komarius and Others.

Formula of Reunion

Two years later, in 433 John I reconciled with Cyril based on the *Formula of Reunion*, a theological formula devised as a compromise. In the process, John I lost many of his own supporters within his patriarchate. Some of his letters are extant.